



Victim Justice Bulletin

VOCA FUND UPDATE

The Victims of Crime Act of 1984 is the Federal government's principle means of providing support for programs that serve victims of all types of crime. Each year, Federal criminal fines, forfeitures and special assessments are deposited into the Crime Victims Fund (the Fund). These offender generated revenues -- **NOT TAXPAYER DOLLARS** -- are used to support these programs:

[Children's Justice Act](#)

[U.S. Attorney's victim/witness coordinators](#)

[F.B.I. victim assistance](#)

[specialists](#)

[Federal victim notification system](#)

[OVC discretionary grants](#)

[State compensation formula grants](#)

[State victim assistance formula grants](#)

[Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve](#)

Prior to FY2000, all of the money deposited into the Crime Victims Fund from the collection of Federal criminal fines, forfeitures and assessments, was allocated the following fiscal year according to a formula in the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) statute. Because of

wide fluctuations in the amount deposited, beginning in FY2000, Congress began imposing a limitation or "cap" on the amount of Fund deposits that could be obligated the following year.

Congress said it was delaying use of the deposits above the cap in order "to protect against wide fluctuations in receipts into the Fund, and **to ensure that a stable level of funding will remain available for these programs in future years.**" [Conference Report 106-479]

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NEW COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATOR

The Crime Victim Assistance Division welcomed Rob Wheeler to the office in March 2005. Rob moved to Iowa from Colorado where he ran his own law firm. Prior to opening his law firm Rob worked as a prosecutor, a judge and in

a private law firm. In his spare time Rob enjoys spending time with his 9 year old son Kohl, playing guitar, playing hockey and walking his Malamute Rico. Rob is enjoying Iowa and his new position at CVAD. Welcome Rob!



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DID YOU KNOW....

- Iowa has 28 domestic violence and 28 sexual abuse programs
- Iowa has 4 survivors of homicide programs
- Iowa has 58 victim witness coordinators serving 41 counties

VOCA, continued

Congress also amended the VOCA statute to reflect the preservation of all deposits for future VOCA programs. The amounts remaining in the Fund are carried over from year to year to be used when Fund deposits are less than the next year's cap. Three times in the past six years -- in FYs 2002, 2003 and 2004 -- Congress has relied on this "rainy day reserve" because of insufficient deposits.

As part of its FY 2006 budget, the Administration recommended a VOCA cap of \$650 million. Ominously, however, despite strong and repeated Congressional assurances that the entire Fund would remain available for future victim services, the Administrations budget also called for rescission -- or "removal" -- of all amounts other than the \$650 million from the Fund -- this includes the "rainy day reserve" and the amounts that will be deposited into the Fund during FY 2006. **In other words, there would be nothing in the Fund at the beginning of FY 2007.**

This is important because the VOCA statute contains a rather complicated formula that determines how much each of the above programs will receive.

The Department of Justice must know the total amount made available at the start of each fiscal year in order to calculate those amounts. Nearly 90 percent of each year's distribution is used for State crime victim compensation and State victim assistance formula grants. If the Fund is empty at the beginning of the fiscal year, there is no way for DOJ to know how much to award for these grants.

This plan would result in a disastrous situation for victim service providers and the millions of crime victims they serve each year. If Congress agrees to this rescission, they will be breaking their promise to crime victims that all deposits into the Fund would be used for victim services.

Congress is now considering the FY 2006 budget. Crime victims and victim advocates have let Congress know how important VOCA is and that they must oppose the administration's rescission of the Crime Victims Fund.

Call, email or fax your Congressional delegation and ask that they continue to protect the VOCA fund. Find out how to contact your Senator and Representatives (often just by entering your zip code) by going to these web sites:

- Senators:
http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

- Representatives:
<http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

- CSPAN:
<http://www3.capwiz.com/c-span/dbq/officials/>

Congress Merge:
<http://www.congressmerge.com/online/index.htm>

Connect to their offices through this toll-free number: 1-800-247-2971 or call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at (202) 224-3121.



VICTIM SERVICES GRANT PROGRAM

July 1, 2005 was the beginning of the fiscal year and the beginning of the 2006 grant contract period. The Victim Services Grant Program (VSG) funded eighty-four organizations with two-hundred and twenty-nine contracts for a total of \$8,607,440. During the past fiscal year the VSG processed 2,454 claim vouchers for reimbursement. The VSG continues to do on-site monitoring visits and completed twenty-six in the past

fiscal year. The VSG funds not only victim service programs providing services to domestic violence and sexual assault victims, but homicide survivor programs, youth services programs, law enforcement, prosecution, victim/witness coordinators, the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence and the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault. The Victim Services Grant staff ensures that grant applicants comply with federal and state

statutory guidelines and rules for eligibility to receive funds. The grant staff consists of the a Grant Administrator—Virginia Beane who has been with the VSG since 1989, Certified Public Accountant—Kristi Etzel who has been with the VSG since 1998, and two Assistant Grants Administrators—Donna Phillips and Becky Kinnamon who have been with the VSG since 2003. Call 515-281-5044 to reach one of the grant staff.

IOWA CRISIS RESPONSE TEAM

The Iowa Crisis Response Team (ICRT) is made up of volunteers from many different professions including victim advocates, mental health care, child psychologists, law enforcement officers, health care professionals, members of the clergy, and educators.

Each member of the team has completed a forty hour community crisis response curriculum designed by the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA). The team is prepared to respond within twenty four hours to a call for assistance.

Upon invitation from a community in crisis, the ICRT will activate a team composed of ICRT members. The ICRT is specifically prepared to serve communities in the wake of a crime-related disaster.

The ICRT service will be coordinated with other primary responders, such as the Red Cross, Iowa Emergency Management Division and local caregivers.

The goals of the ICRT are to:

- Assist local caregivers to plan and implement immediate and long-range response after a catastrophe or disaster;
- Provide emotional and respite support for local caregivers;
- Provide focused training on immediate crisis response and long-term reduction of traumatic stress;

- Provide group debriefing sessions to critical population groups in cooperation with local caregivers.

The ICRT will respond to Iowa communities that experience a crime related, human, or natural disaster. The ICRT will respond only when invited by local authorities.

There is no charge for the Iowa Crisis Response team to come to a community. If you are interested in learning more about being a member of the ICRT please contact Alison Walding at alison.walding@ag.state.ia.us. If you would like to request a team to come to your community please call Alison at 800-373-5044.



Directors Bulletin by Marti Anderson



You are reading the first issue of the new CVAD email newsletter. We will distribute the newsletter to CVA Board members, programs that receive funds from CVAD, and Iowa Crisis Response Team members. Please forward the newsletter far and wide.

This is the sixteenth year of the CVAD. In FY90 we had six staff, seven Board members, and two programs -- Crime

Victim Compensation and Victim Services Grants. In FY06 we have ten Board members, 22 staff, and four programs -- Sexual Abuse Examination Payment and the Iowa Crisis Response Team have been added. In FY90, we awarded \$915,555 to 32 Victim Service Grant Program grantees. In FY05 we awarded \$8,480,647 to 77 grantees. In FY90, we received 476 applications for Crime Vic-

tim Compensation and awarded \$807,155 to crime victims. In FY05 we received 2,886 applications and awarded \$5,484,864 to crime victims.

The mission of the Crime Victim Assistance Division is to advocate for the rights and needs of crime victims and ensure that all crime victims and survivors will be treated with respect and dignity.



SPOTLIGHT ON CVAD BOARD MEMBER FRED SCALETTA

"I was appointed to the Crime Victim Assistance Board (CVAB), by Attorney General Tom Miller, in January of 1990. Although 15 years seems like a long time, the experience of being a part of the division planning and development, observing the progress, and sharing the results as a model program for other states to follow seems like only yesterday. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve in a capacity that provides such compassion

and sensitivity to crime victims. I have had the opportunity to serve the board as a standing member and in a leadership role as Board Chair. In both capacities I have observed a very dedicated, committed and hard working staff. This program has been a strong foundation to other offices, agencies and programs that protect and serve victims, including the Department of Corrections".

Fred Scaletta has been with the Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC) for 27.5 years. He started as a residential advisor and now serves as the Public and Media Relations Director. His duties include the areas of Victim Services, Homeland Security, and the Rape Elimination Program. The CVAB is comprised of 10 members. The Board sets policy for the division and hears compensation and grant appeals 6 times each year.

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www.state.ia.us/government/ag/CVAD

***Victims' Rights: Planting
Seeds - Harvesting Justice***

*The **Crime Victim Compensation Program** provides financial compensation to victims who have suffered personal injury as a result of a criminal act. Benefits are awarded for out-of-pocket expenses and lost wages related to emotional and physical injury suffered by the victim and the victim's family as a direct result of the crime. In addition, eligible victims may receive compensation for lost wages related to cooperation with the investigation and prosecution of the crime. The program does not compensate victims for damaged or stolen property.*

*The **Iowa Sexual Abuse Examination Payment Program** was established in 1979 to pay the cost of victims evidentiary examinations in sexual abuse crimes. Administration of the program was transferred from the Department of Public Health to the CVAD on July 1, 1990. All funds for the program come from the Compensation Fund, which consists of fines and penalties paid by criminals.*

*The **Victim Services Grant Program** provides partial funding and technical assistance to community-based and statewide victim service programs throughout Iowa. Some funded programs investigate and prosecute crimes of violence against women and others provide free and confidential counseling and advocacy services to persons who are victims of violent crime. In FY06 the Victim Services Grant Program administers two state funded and three federally funded grant sources.*

SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE VICTIMS PROGRAM

The Survivors of Homicide Victims Program was created in 1991 to address the needs of families of homicide and vehicular homicide victims, commonly known as "homicide survivors" or "co-victims." This program is located in Cedar Rapids and is part of Horizons, A Family Service Alliance. The Program serves Linn County and surrounding counties, as well as being available to travel based on need, budget and availability of staff. The Survivor's Program addresses the immediate and long-term needs of persons who are survivors of homicide victims or whose lives have been impacted by violent crime. The program offers death notification, crisis intervention, individual counseling, criminal justice system advocacy, referral services, assistance in filing for crime victim compensation, community education and a long-term support system. Services are available 24 hours a day at no cost to clients. The purpose of these services is to counterbalance the trauma and insensitive

treatment victims often experience in the aftermath of violent crime. Program staff work closely with local law enforcement and prosecutors and provide a variety of training opportunities to educate relevant professionals. The program builds trust with violent crime victims, supports them in their healing, and brings attention to the needs and rights of victims of violent crime. For more information about the Survivor's Program, please contact program staff at (319) 398-3943 or survivors@familyservicesiowa.org.



SUGGESTIONS FOR SURVIVORS

- Establish safety for yourself
- Recognize your loss
- Honor the way you feel and your right to feel that way
- Talk about your feelings with those you trust
- Connect with other survivors of violence and talk about your experience
- Don't be afraid to seek professional help if you are struggling
- Recognize and avoid triggers that take you back to the memory and the fear
- Be patient and avoid rash decisions
- Take care of yourself
- Do not abandon hope